

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 08951 190310Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SY-05 MCT-01 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
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R 180940Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8037
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMCONSUL MONTREAL
USMISSION GENEVA
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
COMSEVENTHFLT
COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA
MAC SCOTT AF BASE
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

CONFIDENTIAL TOKYO 08951

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PAGE 02 TOKYO 08951 190310Z

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, ASEC, JA
SUBJECT: EFFORTS TO REDUCE TENSIONS AT NARITA

REF: TOKYO 5532, TOKYO 8845

-- SUMMARY: WHILE CONTINUING EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN

SECURITY AT NARITA AIRPORT, DURING LAST SEVERAL DAYS GOJ HAS ALSO BEEN MAKING QUIET EFFORTS TO REDUCE CONFRONTATIONAL ATMOSPHERE AND TO LAY GROUNDWORK FOR NEGOTIATIONS TO RESOLVE GRIEVANCES OF ANTI-AIRPORT MOVEMENT. END SUMMARY.

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1. ALTHOUGH GOJ HAS RECENTLY BEEN LEGALLY EMPOWERED TO REMOVE ALL OF 33 OPPOSITION MOVEMENT STRUCTURES AND CONCRETE "FORTRESSES" IN VICINITY OF NARITA AIRPORT (REF A), MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION (MOT) ANNOUNCEMENT MAY 15 BANNED USE OF ONLY TWO. DECISION NOT TO INCLUDE MOST FAMOUS OF ANTI-AIRPORT MOVEMENT SHELTERS, SO-CALLED "NUMBER ONE FORT," WHICH MOVEMENT LEADERS HAVE SAID WOULD BE TURNED INTO MUSEUM COMMEMORATING THEIR STRUGGLE, IS VIEWED HERE AS SIGNIFICANT CONCESSION BY GOJ AND KIND OF GESTURE WHICH COULD HELP SAVE FACE AND CALM SUSPICIONS OF OPPOSITION. MOVEOVER, PRESS REPORTS MORNING MAY 18 INDICATE MOT MAY EVEN POSTPONE EVICTION OF OPPOSITIONISTS FROM TWO STRUCTURES, WHOSE USE THEY HAVE BANNED, IN HOPE OF FURTHER REDUCING TENSIONS. MOT APPARENTLY INTENDS TO DEMONSTRATE HOPELESSNESS OF OPPOSITION CAUSE WITHOUT FORCING VIOLENT CLASH BETWEEN POLICE AND RADICALS WHICH MIGHT CREATE PUBLIC SYMPATHY FOR OUTNUMBERED "DEFENDERS" AND INVITE FURTHER VIOLENT REACTION FROM EXTREMISTS.

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PAGE 03 TOKYO 08951 190310Z

2. IN ANOTHER CONCESSION TO OPPOSITION, CHIBA COURT (WITH GOJ APPROVAL) RELEASED ON BAIL TWO OF THREE OPPOSITION LEADERS WHO HAD BEEN ARRESTED MARCH 27. INASMUCH AS OPPOSITION LEADERS WHO HAD REFUSED TO NEGOTIATE WITH GOJ WHILE THEIR LEADERS WERE IMPRISONED, RELEASE SHOULD FURTHER IMPROVE CHANCES FOR OPENING OF FORMAL TALKS BETWEEN GOJ AND ANTI-NARITA GROUPS.

3. DURING CALLS BY EMBOFF MAY 17, OFFICIALS IN CHIBA PREFECTURAL GOVERNMENT (NARITA IS LOCATED IN CHIBA PREFECTURE), CHIBA LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (LDP) HEADQUARTERS, AND CHIBA NIPPO NEWSPAPER SAID LOW-KEY DISCUSSIONS WITH ELEMENTS OF OPPOSITION MOVEMENT WERE BEING CONDUCTED BY GOJ AND LDP. SOURCES ALL AGREED THAT MOST OF 17 FARM FAMILIES STILL OWNING LAND ON SITE OF PROPOSED ADDITIONAL AIRPORT RUNWAY WERE TIRED OF ANTI-AIRPORT STRUGGLE, AND WOULD BE WILLING TO SETTLE IF GOJ WOULD MEET THEIR DEMANDS FOR NEW FARMLAND OUTSIDE OF AIRPORT AREA AND SUBSTANTIAL FINANCIAL COMPENSATION. WITH GOJ IN POSITION TO PROVIDE BOTH, SOURCES THOUGHT IT ONLY MATTER OF TIME, PERHAPS A FEW WEEKS, BEFORE DEAL WAS STRUCK. IF FARMERS' GRIEVANCES WERE SETTLED, EXTREMIST GROUPS WOULD LOSE PLAUSIBLE PRETEXT

FOR DEMONSTRATIONS AND SABOTAGE.

4. HOWEVER, THESE SOURCES ALSO BELIEVED THAT FOR REASONS OF FACE, AND TO AVOID POSSIBLE INTERNAL DISPUTE WITH RADICALS FROM OUTSIDE AREA WHO HAVE BEEN PROVIDING MAN-POWER AND MONEY FOR OPPOSITION MOVEMENT OVER PAST TWELVE YEARS, FARMERS WOULD NEVERTHELESS PROCEED WITH DEMONSTRATIONS AT NARITA PLANNED TO COINCIDE WITH OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONIES MAY 20. SOURCES SAID EFFORTS BY GOJ TO REDUCE TENSIONS AND PURSUE NEGOTIATIONS WOULD PROBABLY HELP REDUCE POTENTIAL FOR VIOLENCE AT DEMONSTRATION ITSELF, BUT THAT POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER ATTEMPTS AT SABOTAGE OF AIRPORT-RELATED FACILITIES BY EXTREMIST ELEMENTS REMAINED STRONG.

MANSFIELD

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PAGE 04 TOKYO 08951 190310Z

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